AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An inner ear stimulation prosthesis ~~including~~ comprising:

an external portion including excitation means designed to generate vibrations capable of exciting a patient's ear, ~~comprising:~~ and

an entirely passive implantable portion, including a rod capable of transmitting vibrations and ~~that is~~ designed so as to be capable of transmitting vibrations generated by ~~the~~ said excitation means from an external portion of the patient's skull directly to the patient's inner ear.

2. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein said rod is designed to be placed in contact with a semicircular canal of the patient's inner ear.

3. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein said rod is designed to be placed in contact with the external semicircular canal of the patient's inner ear.

4. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein said rod is made of a hard and rigid biocompatible material selected from metals, plastics, ceramics and combinations thereof.

5. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein said rod has a cross-section with a flattened shape.

6. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein said rod comprises at least one elbow so as to be capable of connecting an external portion of the patient's skull to the inner ear.

7. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 6, wherein said rod includes first and second ends and has a length between the elbow and the end in contact with a portion of the patient's inner ear of between about 20 and 30 mm.

8. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein the surface of the implantable portion is treated so as to prevent osseointegration.

9. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein said rod is pivotably mounted on a support.

10. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein the excitation means are arranged in an external casing and are designed so as to generate

vibrations intended to be transmitted through the patient's skin to a plate rigidly connected to the rod.

11. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 10, wherein the plate has a substantially rectangular shape with foam edges of which the length is between 6 mm and 20 mm and the width is between 3 mm and 10 mm.

12. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 10, wherein the external casing is integrated in an object capable of being held on the patient's head so that the excitation means are arranged opposite the plate of the implantable portion.

13. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 12, wherein the object capable of being held on the patient's head is selected from one of a pair of eyeglasses or a casing that fits around the ear.

14. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 10, wherein the external casing includes at least one magnetic part intended to cooperate with at least one magnetic part provided in the implantable portion so as to hold the excitation means opposite the plate.

15. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein the excitation means are integrated in the implantable portion and coupled directly with the rod.

16. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein said rod is rigidly connected to attachment means for attaching the rod to the patient's skull bone.

17. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 16, wherein the excitation means are housed in an external casing equipped with coupling means, so as to be removably attached through the patient's skin to attachment means attached to the patient's skull bone.

18. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 17, wherein the external casing includes a microphone attached on the side of a totally defective ear of the patient, while the rod is attached so as to excite the other ear of the patient, with the vibrations generated by the excitation means being transmitted to the rod by bone conduction of the patient's skull bone.

19-22 (Cancelled)

23. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis according to claim 6 wherein said elbow of said rod provides an elbow angle of between about 70° and 130° between the first and second ends of the rod.

24. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis of claim 1 wherein said prosthesis provides neurostimulation for treating tinnitus.

25. (Previously Presented) The prosthesis of claim 1 wherein said prosthesis provides neurostimulation for treating balance disorders.